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=AT ONCE=

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LITTLE DICK.

Poor old Widow Loring! A hard time she had of it. Her husband, a rowdy and the bully of the settlement, had given up the ghost some years prior to the breaking out of the war, and left her with five some and one frail daughter to the mercies of a cold and

cracker woman, uncouth in dress, uncultured in speech, but a truer, braver heart never up-held the honest dignity of motherhood than the seared and oft grief stricken heart of

Aunt 'Mima Loring.

She had had trouble when her husband was alive. She had spent many a sleepless night when her neglectful lord was indulging in the wild orgies of the crossroads grocery's biggest carousal. Every time the great owl would hoot from his perch in the great pine tree in the lonely woods her heart would leap and she would expect to hear the rough "hello!" at the gate from some half drunken com-

and hearty, the image of his father, when first Aunt 'Mima danced with him at the party after the quilting and log rolling day, so long ago. Mack came next, a stout, comely lad, very much reserved, and almost industrious. Riley was tall and slender, like his mother in form, but like his father, a wild mother in form, but like his father, a wild sort of fellow in disposition. Hamp came fourth among the boys, but Betty was older than he. Hamp was a blockheaded, stupid sort of lad, fond of trapping for birds and fishing in Grand bay, as the big, black swamp, back of the little plantation, was called. And then there was Little Dick.

When the war come Flow Mack and Pillor.

When the war come Eben, Mack and Riley had all grown up to manhood, and might have supported their mother handsomely, but their father's shiftless career seemed to militate against them, and they generally came out at the end of the year with scarce nubbin corn enough for bread, and the yellow cow peas and the stringy potatoes were hardly equal to the emergency of straightening out the lean flanks of the few bundles of bone and bristle, known as "piney woods rooters," and sometimes mistaken for

Nevertheless, by the aid of the good mother, and the scrawny looking slip of a sister, they managed to live. Then came the Aunt 'Mima and Betty span and wove the cloth from which Eben's first uniform of gray mixed cloth was made, and the strong, sturdy fellow was not sorry that he had a chance of "Glitin" out o' henscratch o' the house," as he expressed it. Riley and Mack soon followed, and the beams of the old boom trembled as the shuttle flew back and forth turning its strokes to the rythmic drone of the busy spinning wheel. They were basy, Aunt 'Mima and Betty, weaving a suit for Hamp, and all too soon the call came. The hungry call for more troops. The blood curdling howl of the famished dogs of war. "More men! More men!" And when the most heartrending demand came, "Give us

away with flopping cloth hats and mixed gray uniforms of home-pun, and ill fitting of red leather, your boys bad gone, marching away, marching away,

mountain and valley Ah, you that are thrilled with stiering emo

tions when you rend how that knightly commander, bearded and booted, rode forward down into battle with a song on his lips: When the dew is on the like Little think ye how many brave boyish hearts swelled up into their throats at the

thought of widowed mothers among the bar-Mack came home. He was brought on the

a cart to his home in the piney woods. Only the poor, shattered wreck of a man came home, and she had watched four stout lads go marching away. 'I haint got but two now, an' Mack, poor

feller, I'm afeared be'll never see the black-berry blossensagin. He was ter'bly wounded at the start an' them hospide masses thest in a manner made it was. Then here's Little Dick, God sen' they won't want my baby

lad! Five feet, scant at that, slander and boyish. Two great hollow eyes set in a pinehed, pale face, the unattractiveness of which was heightened by a thin, scattered head of sun scorelied hair. A little whitish, fuzzy down on cheek and chin, where the beard should have appeared and the surroundings given more encouragement. Color-less complexion, save the sallow cast of sunburn, and a few blue voice up under the brim of his flooped but. The ill fitting clothes hung about his person, and the boys said that he used to have to drag his musket when our

of her liaby boy. Great tears chased one wept, and prayed, and hugged Little Dick to her becom-that becom on which his baby locks had oft been pillowed Good by, Little Dick. May God keep my

little buddy! Oh — Dick was gone. Two big tears plowed each a furrow down the sunbrowned clock

and hung trembling on the fuzzy chin like rain drops on the hairy calyx of a wild thistle. Dick was gone. Marching in strag-gling ranks with gray bearded men, too old for service, and other beardless boys too young to bear arms. The "state troops?" What a satire on the pomp and glory of war across the hills and valleys and echoes from Hare "

Times were hard in Georgia. They w desperate n the piney woods. Hungry, hol-low eyed women went from house to house asking aid. A few slaveholders had corn and they gave it out in small quantities to the most needy. Sometimes bands of desperate women attacked a barn or com carried off the contents. Rob the most docile animal of her young, slay her mate and then starve her, and see if the numbed

Poor old Aunt 'Mima! She would leave Betty at home and walk many miles across the desolate pine woods to secure the crackings from the plantation fat gourd or a little dribble of molasses in the old brown jug where Ebenezer and to keep the sperits."

faculties do not gradually, but surely, con-centrate into the one wild instinct of self

I remember seeing the good woman out with a handful of cracklings and a skirty piece of dried beef in her apron, and that jug under her arm. She had walked five miles, starting early, to secure these, and was now on her return, and two miles yet from home The molasses had fermented under the heat of a July sun, and the corncob stopper had been forced out, and the foaming liquid was running out.

Do you suppose she let a drop go to waste! No, she caught it on her lean finger and licked the finger greedily, and talked of Mack and Little Dick

"I hain't got time (swipe) to stop a minit (lick) but hit's jes' awastin' (swipe) an' it do look so pitiful (lick) to see it go to waste, (swipe) an' them po' children asufferin' (lick) fur sumkin, ye gimme a leetle speck (swipe). taller grease to put in it (lick) to keep hit f'om awerkin'?" And then she sat down on the doorstep to

rest a minute, while the jug cooled.

"No, I hain't hearn nothin' from Little Dick sence he got in the mountains. I don't never spec to see him no more. Five boys have I sent to the war, an' one po' lifeless creetur is all I've got left; but, oh, I mustn't forgit to tell ye, Mae got that ball out'n his thigh today, jes' kep' awurkin' an' agourin' et it, tell it drapped out. I do b'lieve the child's agwine

to git well arter all." And then she resumed her weary tramp through the woods, Mack and Betty managed to get along somehow, and the good old mother seemed to be insensible to fatigue. So it come about that when the broken frag-ment. Lee brave legions came straggling homeward that Mack was able to hobble ou on his crutches, and lean on the rickety gate

and hear the news from some tired veteran homeward bound. "The last I seed uv 'im," said a great bearded warrior, in reply to Aunt Mina's question, "wus in one o' them fights around Atlanty. We was whipped, as we gin'ly was long then, an' broke for a fence. Little Dick got to the fence an' we hollered to im to throw down his musket, but he helt on to it. I reckon he was too skeered to un'stan. Anyhow he jes' kep' holt on it, an' wen he clumb up on the fence a rail gave way, an' he fell back and, and then the Yankees fired so fas that there wer'n't no tellin' nothin' about a'terward, an' we lost him."

The little crop was planted, and the two women worked faithfully, and Mack hobbled about on his crutches and helped them all he could. Spring was come when the war closed. Summer days had waxed and waned before many of these inmates of northern prisons found their way back to the old familiar

The harvest was not great, but Aunt 'Minus and Betty felt that the millennium had come when they were able to sit down and ent a reasonably hearty meal of bread and bacon, after the wintery sun had veiled himself behind the rifts of watery clouds that hung above the tree tops. The long, long, war was over. The shrill cry of the famished dogs of war no longer carried terror among the hearts of these simple, out of the world folks hidden away among the barrens.

Many a time and oft they conversed together, and the grieving mother mourned her

dead boys. "I can bear the less of 17ben an Hamp, because I've got use to it," she would say. "But my baby boy. Poor little Dick! I know the rest aire dead and gone, but I don't know wher' Dick is."

I never shall forget that Christmas came. Christmas time. I shall ever remember how the poor, fool negroes strutted and paraded. and fired the old muskets, and had a big time 'Cause you see, sah, de bottom rail's got on de top o' the fence," they would say. And the soldiers who had missed three or four Christmasses entered into the enjoyment of this with renewed energy.

Christmas eve I was at Aunt 'Minne's house. I liked to be with them and hear Mack tell about the Shenandouh vafley and Stonewall Jackson, and all his fund of adventure and perilous escape, and mighty victories and crushing defeats.

Aunt 'Mima sat in the corner busy with her knitting. Betty was popping some red pop-corn over the fire, and Mack sat half in shadow, sawing away on his father's old fiddle, the only piece of personal property the old man left to his sor

Aunt Mima had been buried in thought, and I was a little startled when she spoke so

"Children, wouldn't you all be glad if Little Dick would come home! for it seems to me fangled mines truck now a days, and it's a that I'd be reconciled to all the rest of he goin' to take all the sassafras in the moungood Lord. Jes' to see my buby boy again."
"Then your wish is granted," came a voice

in the arms of mother and sister.

I shall not attempt to describe the scene. I will leave all that to the facile pen of the emotional novelist, who has the trick of porme remember to this ear who it was that ued the frying pan full of popcorn from the fire. I do not know how come the fildle bridge down, and several strands of hair broken in the bow. I know that after all was over we began to realize that Little Dick had grown wonderfully tall. He had added neariy a half a foot to his stature, and his fuzzy beard had developed into a nice brown beard. He had been in a northern prison and in a Federal hospital and he had walked the streets of many northern city, and he had a long, long

story to tell. But he had come back. Auni-

Mima seemed to have grown ten years

but the living pressure of her baby boy strengthened and comforted her. And now, I am going to tell you confidentially, that this story is every word true. I could carry you to a big lumber mill on the line of a couthern railroad, and I could show you the superintendent, who walks with a imp; that is Mack. I could carry you to a quiet home, where a sweet faced woman, an ancient dame and maiden lady divide the honor of rolling over the realm of the house-Children frolic about the premises. One of these women is Mrs. Loring, Jr., and one is Aunt Minus and one is Betty. Down at the effice I could point out to you athrifty, active looking business man, the owner of the mill, and that is Little Dick.-Montgomery

Beware of "They Say." Wall street men are great on quotations. When a reporter remarked to a big man in

and color and being the state of the side and the state of the state of the side and the state of the state of the side and the state of the state o

gregation had long since turned its back to in in the greater meeting above. Miss Polly was by no means young. No one asked her age, it was too delicate a subject for her; and all were careful of her feelings, else she could not have lived so unmolested in such a remote quarter of the town. She had not many ideas, but the few she did possess were graven upon her very soul, and nothing short of a presbytery of psalm singing ministers could have changed her opinions.

As Miss Polly grew older her devotion to the little psalm singing church increased. After gathering together a few hundred dol-lars, the hard earned savings of her lonely lifework, she decided to build a home of her own, under the shadow of the church, of which she alone was the surviving member. Nothing could dissuade her from it. The idea came to her late in life; yet it took the usual adamantine character of all her ideas, and stayed with her until board was placed upon post, shingles upon roof, and the small cottage became the only settled home that poor Miss Polly had known for many long years.

The old church was pressed into service as a receptacle for the numerous boxes, bags and baskets which were the accumulation of her years of "living round." Any bright morning she might have been seen coming out of her cottage, armed with a formidable iron key, so large that it would have done valuable service as a weapon of defense. It was the key to the old fashioned lock, which held in doubtful security the sacred interior of Miss Polly's church,

Opening one side of the much decayed doors, she would march as promptly and decorously to her pew in the "amen corner" as though the building were filled with the same prim brethren and sisters who had occupied it a half century since. With mathe matical precision she scated herself at a sufficient distance from the end of the pew nearest the aisle, to allow the sludes of her father and mother their accustomed places. Not one hair's breadth did she infringe upon cant seat of her older brother upon the left. She had always seated herself so in her parents' lifetime, and what was good enough for her then she would not depart from now. She would then take her yellowed hymn book-or, to be orthodox, psalm book-and sing in a voice that was peculiarly nerve racking. No matter where the book opened, there she felt inspired to sing. Inspiration opened the pages at the padm which she most needed. She used her own tunes, regardless of the metrical fitness of verse and sound. After her musical uplifting of soul and voice, she would go about her secular oties, as if in a more worldly place. Old unks, hingeless, strapless, lockless, were

round her; handboxes tied with strips of ded calleo, in lieu of more comely fastengs; a pair of wool cards, long since fallen into disuse with the spinning wheel, and in

can be said to come under that head-as one can find nowhere save in the garret of some family long resident ir one place, with whom it is part of the ancestrial religion to keep all that was the grandfather's, from his broad acres to his saddle stirrups. After raising the cloth spread carefully beneath the lid, a bag of pumpkin seed first attracted her at--seed saved for no purpose whatever, since she did not cultivate a garden. Nevertheless, they were tied up securely in one of a remaining pair of cotton stockings, which were the work of the owner's hands. the stocking was once untied in went the long slender fingers among the golden seed, while visions of a pumpkin pie enten at the Hickey family reunion ten years since, passed before her mental sight; thoughts of how she insisted upon the seed of that special pumpkin being saved and given to her, for no reason in the world save that she enjoyed the posses-

sion of the bornely and useful. "We don't have no more ples like them The young folks run arter the newoccuse home. That's all I ask of the tains to get the p'ison out o' their blood in the d. Jet to see my baby boy again." spring o' the year. "Ah, hat" sighed the speaker, as she laid the seed on a bench by her side, and reached out to the farther end from the door, "for your boy's come home," her sale, and reached out to the farth and in another breath Little Dick was clasped of the trunk for a large sunset bonnet.

"That's my last piece of foolishness," continued prodent Miss Polly. "Law me! it's been forty-two years since I bought that for the meetin' a goin' on at Garr Pond church. traying such things. I cannot for the life of Ah, Preacher Stubbel you never knowed how I lowed to ketch you that 'air time. Sakes alive, these men! If they ain't the biggest fools, and the women makes 'em so adressin' up and struttin 'round arter them

With a strong emphasis on the latter word, Miss Polly gave vent to her contempt for the looseness of the present as compared with the rigid rearing of her own young life.

"Twan't so when I war young; didn't have no train to run to them days, 'stend o' staylo' at home a-spinnin' and a-knittin' and a-comis up lookin' proper at meetin' Sundays. But, Prencher Stoble-sh, bal -and she gave a sigh, an actual sigh, with a suggestion of "I lowed I'd make him make up to me-

younger. Grass grew on the graves of her other boys, and she cherished their memory, 'cause-cause-pshaw: I never cared a snap for him-when I knowed he was married. I guess them gals was foolin' me when they said he lowed as how he'd be pleased to make my 'quaintanes at the meetin'. I ain't forgot how they shood 'round a-miggerin' at me when I walked out o' the house when dinner time come, and Brother Stuble be said, "Low me to passent my wife, Miss Brown" Sakes alive) but didn't I r'ar back queenlike and say as how I was keen to meet the wife o' sich a good man. They never knowed I was a dissprinted woman. I come right home and put this here foolishness down in this trunk and it's been here ever since. I vowed I'd never wear it, and I sin't done it."

This was no near an affair of the heart as

Miss Polly had ever been. Her life being always a lonely one, and hard even in youth, a ough shell had closed her within it, ur persons could find the traces of a tender man's heart in enything she did. The only approach to a sentiment in which she indulged was her devotion to the church

personal effects. The latter she often looked

over and talked to as though they were

her wisthe lady, was determined to see what she
wished, entered as yard, crossed it and
peered through a broshutter into the peered through a brong shutter into the church. Having satisfied boulf she bade the self constituted watchwoman and morn-

the self constituted watchwoman and morning, departing for the home of Mrs. Durley, where she was visiting.

"What does that woman want here!" soliloquized Miss Polly, when Miss Glover's

back was turned. Early the next morning clad in her old fashioned costume, she wended her way to the house waere the strange lady was staying. When Mrs. Dudley met her at the door Miss Polly scarcely gave her time to recognize her before she began, in her energetic manner, to declare that her church was a psalm singing one, and as long it was that woman could not take it from her.

"Oh! Miss Glover had no thought of molest-ing you nor of laying claim to the church. wanted to see it solely on account of its great age and peculiar appearance," an wered Mrs. Dudley.
"Yes, but what did she come a lookin'so

suspicious like for, and speepin' in at the winders? She can't take it away from me she can't do it," continued Miss Polly, em phatically. After much arguing and persuading Mrs. Dudley convinced her that Miss Glover had

no thought of interfering, so she went away with a lighter heart. For a thanks offering she sang a psalm in the amen corner of her dear church The singing produced great peace of mind, so that the duties of her small establishment were soon performed, and she sat down to

piece a "log cabin" quilt, intended for "Jeems" Hickey, a new arrival. "Come in," called Miss Polly, as a knock was heard at her door about 11 o'clock that

"Good morning," said a gentlemanly but very firm voice, as the door opened and Mr. Wrenn stepped into the room. "I have a proposition to make to you, Mise Polly: I believe you are the only surviving

mber of this church?" 'Yes, sir; I am the only pealm singin' mem ber of this psalm singin' church in this here "Then, since you are the only member, you

of course, cannot afford to maintain public "I maintains public worship ever day in that 'air meetin' house. I open the door, and if the people don't come I ain't to blame. I do my part. I sings a psalm in that house

ever day-yes, I do." "With all due respect to your the eyes of the law your solitary wombining cannot be considered public. The county court has condemned the building and ordered it to be taken down at once. You can see yourself how the east wall has bulged; it is liable at any time to fall against your house,

endangering your life." a large chair sat a long crooked gourd filled "Let the lawyer's attend to their own busi with neatly tied up bundles of calico, saved ness, the m dilesome set of thieres: The with neatly fied up bundles or care, some new venture in the quilting field.

One morning Miss Folly opened one of the large which had once been covered with they tear it down they will have to tear means they won't dare to tech me. I

> "The court is willing to allow you to live on the premises as long as you live. After it has censed to be used as a church the property goes to the county. Only for the ublic good has it ordered it to be taken

"Let it fall down, it can't hurt nobody but

"The tearing down is to begin at once, as the judge has ordered. It will be better for you to let the work go on quietly. would dislike to use force in carrying out our orders, since we all respect your age and

"Git out o' here, you impudent man! My

me. It ain't in nobody's way."

parents sung pealms in that house before you was born, and you can't-you sha'n't take it down." Miss Polly's voice had risen to a high pitch; her eyes danced in the ardor of her speech. Grasping the iron key she held it for a moment above her head, and then dropped it into her pocket. Hastening to the church she

into her pocket. Hastening to the church she unlocked the door and awaited developments; then, opening her pealm book she began to sing in her high, shrill voice.

Two men stepped into the doorway. "Here, love, begin work, take out the seats first, called Mr. Wreen to a half dozen workmen behind him. The singer sprang to her feet and rushed straight to the men, gesticulating wildly and singing defiantly as she stood before them. The men actually trembled as they looked Take then actuary trembled as they looked upon her almost supernatural expression.

Take ten out if you can, cried Miss Polly, they are in a pealm single church, and ever nait that fastens we not the floor had been drive in by the note of a pealm sung in reaction.

teen driv in by the note of a pealm sung in meeting."

Two workness caught hold of one of the high backed pews; after a series of wrenchings, pulliture and the vigorous use of hammers they did not succeed in moving it, as Miss Polly assured them they would not. The men looked at one moother in amazement. Could the old woman be speaking the truth!

Were they work through four! The seat or. Were they weak through fear? The seat re-

"Ha! I told you you couldn't move 'em," shouted Miss Polly.
"Come in here the rest of you!" called out "Conce in here the rest of you!" called out Mr. Wrenn; "try your hand on that pulpit." Once more the devoted voice was raised in you; a size took her stand in front of the sacred desk, when the men lay hold upon it. This effort to move the pulpit was as unsuccessful as the one with the pew. Euraged at their poor success, Mr. Wrenn undertook to loosen it. Giving it one powerful pull, his hands elipped with the energy of the effort and he fell with great force upon the floor. The men raised him only to find him speechless and with a horrible gash cut in his forehead, from which the blood flowed profusely. He had struck the sharp, upturned edge of a hatchet, and the blow was a fatal one.

Muss Pour sang a paalm of joy, not because of the death of the man who was so determined to demoissle her church, but in honor of the paalm singer's triumph over all courtly

of the pealm singer's triumph over all courtly

From that day to this the building has been regarded with a superstitious awe by the people of Efburg. The aged woman continues to sing her divinely selected pealins of thanksgiving for the only thing left her to love.—Eugene Sadler Ashton in Times Democrat.

For the Present Only.

The fascination of journalism can compared to that of the footlights. In litera-ture posterity has a voice. In journalism one snape his fingers at the future and refuses to be awed by the past. The present—the present-to-day is king. - The Epoch.

"Aunt 'Mima," we were taught to call her, was a gaunt and grizzied specimen of a

panion come to tell her that Ebenezer was killed or badly hurt.

Of the boys, there was young Eben, hale

your boys! Give us your boys!"

Ah, the war, the war! Not satisfied with the blood of men, the tender forms of cherished boyhood-all-all must go. Not con-tent with the yellow grain, the tender stalk, while yet in the milk, must be cut down. The flower of the south was plucked and trampled under the iron beel of relentiess war, and now the gaunt, bloody hand was extended to cuil the half blown bud, the hope

Four boys gone marching away to die for a cause, the justness of which the poor widow was unable to argue. What did she care for the doctrine of states rights! How could the perpetuation or abolition of slavery affect her? Her four boys were gone marching away, marching away. Not with plumes waving and victorious banners floating in the breeze. No, not triumphant and finished with hope. They had gone marching away into the jaws by the Potomac's crimsoned flood, Marching

Eben was killed in the wilderness, Rifley. died in prison, Hamp died of exhaustion and the hardships of a northern climate, while following Jeb Stuart in his wild rides over

cars to the nearest station, and then hauled in

But they did. They wanted the baby boy. The hungry war dogs must snap and scarl over the weakly frame of Little Dick, too How well I remember the weakly looking

of breath on a long march.

Poor Aunt "Muna! She left the bedside where the body of her emaciated boy lay in inert and indifferent prestration between life and death, the munly tones of voice dwindled down to a quernlous treble, and the animated look changed to the vacant, nerveless stare of hopelessness. She left this sorrowful scene enfold in a ford embrace the puny form another down the bosom of the Ill fitting jacket, and kisses rained on the sunformed cheek until the lips, parched with grief, were no longer able to drop the holy dew of a mother's love on the pale check of her baby box. Betty

darling boy from harm."
"Good by, Little Dick. Oh, my precious

M. Folsom in Atlanta Constitution. What a satire on the pomp and glory of war the street, "They say so, and so is going up," to call these weak kneed old men and these weak armed boys troops. But the hungry ware of the expression, "They say." It is the of her forefathers, her remedies and her few howl of the fierce dogs of war come sweeping catchword of goesips and the shibboleth of